



NATIONAL ACTIVE & RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES Newsletter

Serving Chico 1245, Greater Paradise/Oroville 0352, Feather River/Quincy 2236,
And District IV

VOLUME 30 ISSUE 10

688 Henshaw Ave. CHICO, CA 95973

November 2023

SUNSHINE AND SHADOWS

Daylight Savings Time
Ends 11/5

Veterans' Day Observed
11/10

Veterans' Day
11/11

Thanksgiving Day
11/23



Happy November Birthdays To:

Ron Griffin	11/15
Gloria Rose	11/22
Tony Doty	11/24
Jane Crognale	11/26
Judy Lacert	11/26

If you think we do not have the date of your birthday, please call, or send a message to Sandy Griffin with the date.

Next Meeting for 1245 & 352
Tuesday, November 14, 2023
12:00 Lunch and Meeting

Location
Kalico Kitchen
2396 Esplanade



President's Message

Well, we have definitely moved into our usual fall weather (cooler) and changing color in the trees. Sandy and I have been trying to mix in some travel. We have been to Monterey, Iowa (to see our grandson at his college), and to Napa for some wine tasting and art. We are slipping off to Seattle for four days but after that, we should be here through Thanksgiving.

November Meeting: Tuesday, November 14th at 12:00 at the Kalico Kitchen. Our program, as usual this month, will be presented by our local Passages/HICAP office. Arlyn Beneke will be there to discuss Medicare and answer any and all questions you might have as best he can. Please come and hear from Arlyn.

2024 COLA: Well, I missed on my estimate of our COLA last month(2.7%). As it turned out, we will get a 3.2% COLA increase.

Last Month's Meeting: Wow! What a great meeting. Great attendance. Thanks to Teri DuBose (Congressman LaMalfa's District Representative), Tatianna Fassieux (Passages/HICAP Representative), Richard Gracey (BC/BS), Rick Tapnio (Aetna), and materials from Dane Lawlor (GEHA). Thanks also to all of you who participated in our FEHB Open Season Kick off event. Thanks also to all the information that was provided by everyone and all the great questions.

2023 Walk to End Alzheimer's: Sandy and I participated in the Chico Walk on Saturday, October 14th in Bidwell Park, near Sycamore Pool. As you can see, we had some beautiful signs, loaned to us by the Sunrise Chapter. They had used them a few weeks earlier in Sacramento. It was a great event. We were there to let people know how much Alzheimer's Research means to NARFE members.

Our chapter can participate as a virtual team by collecting donations from members and turning them in together, so our Chapters and Federation get credit to add to the current goal. Thanks to Joe and Ginny Church for sending a donation just because they thought it was about the right time for the Chico Walk.

If you would like to participate, please send a check made out to "Walk to End Alzheimer's", with "NARFE" written on the memo line and send it to Sandy Griffin at 688 Henshaw Ave., Chico CA 95973. Or, better yet, you could bring it to the meeting on the 14th.

Remember FEHB Open Season: It starts November 13th and runs until December 11th. Review the information and premiums and make your decision. Stay with what you already have and do nothing or make the change by December 11th. There are still opportunities to learn. See the virtual Health Fair on November 6th that Richard Gracey helped organize.

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LEGISLATION UPDATES AND ADVOCACY

A Message From NARFE President William Shackelford

NARFE has a true professional managing the operation of NARFE headquarters. Staff Vice President Johann DeCastro was named the interim chief of staff in 2022. On July 24, I officially removed that “interim” tag from his position.

As chief of staff, he plays a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction of our organization. His passion, expertise and dedication will continue to inspire and lead our team to new heights.

NARFE continues to grow its membership, communications, advocacy and administrative teams. Visit our [Careers page](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for the latest open positions.

If you have a question or feedback, you can reach us by phone at **703-838-7760**. If you have a specific membership question, press 1 or you can email membership@narfe.org. Got a benefits-related question? Press 2 or email fedbenefits@narfe.org. You can always also fill out our [contact form](#).

Senate Advances Minibus Budget with Multiple Amendments

In a significant development on the Senate floor, a long-awaited agreement has been reached to advance a three-bill government-funding package (H.R. 4366), encompassing Agriculture-FDA, Military Construction-VA, and Transportation-HUD spending bills, totaling \$279.3 billion, equivalent to about 17% of overall discretionary spending. This marks a critical bipartisan milestone in the fiscal 2024 funding process.

Before reaching the final passage vote, Senators will first deliberate on 40 proposed amendments covering a wide array of issues, including spending cuts, an anti-shutdown bill, Covid mask mandates, and more. Among the measures, some are subject to a simple majority threshold, while others require 60 votes for adoption. The 27 amendments that were adopted as of Wednesday, October 25, cover measures related to veterans’ electronic health records, toxic exposure studies among veterans, mammography services funding, and the Federal Aviation Administration’s aeronautical information management program.

One significant amendment that may be added to the bill, Senate Amendment 1092, focuses on requiring reporting regarding telework by employees of agencies funded under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024. The amendment aims to improve oversight and quality control of remote work arrangements and assess the cost savings that could be achieved by adjusting locality rates for employees who perform the majority of their working hours in a locality pay area with a lower locality rate than their official worksite (but continue to receive the higher locality rate).

House Elects Speaker Mike Johnson, Gets Back to Work on Government Funding

After more than three weeks of tumult, the United States House of Representatives has elected a new Speaker, Rep. Mike Johnson, R-LA, and returned to its efforts to pass appropriations bills to fund the government.

NARFE Supports Windfall Elimination Provision Reform Bill Introduced by Rep. Arrington

NARFE National President William Shackelford issued a statement in response to Rep. Jodey Arrington, R-TX, introducing the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act, legislation that would provide much-needed relief to civil servants financially punished by the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP)

Editor’s Note: See the address for the newly appointed Senator for California, Laphonza Butler, on page 4.

President's message continued from page 1

A flyer was sent out to all members who have email, but we are hearing that many went to spam or junk mail, so if you did not see it, check that location. It has also been included on FEDHub for all California members with email so you may be able to get it that way. The flyer tells you how to join in.

Ron Griffin, President (530)343-0539 (H) or (530)680-9549 (C)

CALIFORNIA FEDERATION NEWS

November Federation Board Meeting: On November 13th (day before our chapter meeting) I will be leading our next Federation Board meeting. Many topics will be covered such as Chapter Bylaws, membership loss and increasing incentives to retain members and gain new ones, developing new Federation micro websites to replace our old website, and of course, chapter statuses.

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR DISTRICT IV

Yuba Sutter 1255: I just talked to Michael Kunsman, President. He had just returned from a six-week cross country driving trip to attend his high school reunion in Ohio. They also visited friends and relatives along the way. It sounds like they had a great trip. He is not sure if the chapter will meet in November or December as they usually go dark then, but he will let me know.

Redding Chapter 1324: I talked to President Naomi Brown and learned that they had a good meeting in October, with 15 in attendance. Their program was a presentation from American Response Medical (first responders). In November there will be their visit from BC/BS (Richard Gracey). They had also participated in the Redding Walk to end Alzheimer's and collected \$355.00. Way to go Redding!

Redwood Eureka Chapter 0608: I just made a call to Diana Stockwell, Chapter Secretary, She was not home but I left a message to see how the chapter is doing. She has been doing a good job of keeping the chapter going while they have been without a president.

Federal Benefits Institute : This is just a reminder about this benefit of the NARFE membership website. Go to the NARFE website and then to the heading that says, "Federal Benefits Institute" and you will find a variety of topics that could be of help to you. There are a variety of recorded or upcoming webinars on topics affecting Federal employees or retirees. The site says:

We know federal benefits are complicated and that there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution for every fed. The NARFE Federal Benefits Institute is a members-only resource designed to help NARFE members take charge of their federal benefits. NARFE's federal benefits experts provide assistance to help NARFE members resolve issues surrounding annuities, insurance, Medicare, Social Security and more. NARFE members have a responsive and reliable team of experts at their service, available by email, phone, or fax. The Institute serves as a gateway to live and recorded learning events and valuable resources. This is a repeat from last month, but we thought it was a good reminder. The most recent Webinar was:

November 2023 - If you missed it, you could still go on the NARFE website and Federal Benefits Institute to see this.
"Choosing the Best FEHB Plan: Medicare Edition"

Thursday, November 2 | 2 p.m. ET

With hundreds of FEHB plan choices, federal retirees may feel paralyzed when choosing the best health plan to fit their needs. This webinar will assist retirees who are eligible for or enrolled in Medicare in understanding the importance of choosing a health plan that works well with Medicare. NARFE federal benefits expert Tammy Flanagan will walk you through how to choose the best health care plan to coordinate with Medicare.

Proudly sponsored by Aetna

The next Webinar will be: "Prescription Drug Benefits for Federal Annuitants in 2024 and Beyond" It will be presented on Thursday, November 9 | 2 p.m. ET. You can register on the site now for this informative webinar.

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WHITE HOUSE COMMENT LINE-202-456-1111 E-Mail www.whitehouse.gov/contact/

NARFE Capitol Hill Toll Free Number: 1-866-220-0044 You can call these numbers, give the name of your Senator or Representative and you will be switched to their office.

NARFE National Web Site: www.narfe.org

California Federation Web Site: www.csfcnarfe.org

NARFE LEGISLATIVE TOLL FREE HOT LINE IS: 1-877-217-8234 (24 HOURS A DAY) (can be used for Advocacy calls)



NARFE's Mission Statement

To support legislation and regulations beneficial to federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants under any federal civilian retirement system and to oppose those detrimental to their interests.

To promote the general welfare of federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants, to advise and assist them with respect to their rights under retirement, health and other employee and retiree benefits laws and regulations, and to represent their interests before appropriate authorities.

To cooperate with other organizations and associations in furtherance of these general objectives.

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